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SUBJECT: SOUTHEAST TURKEY PRESS SUMMARY FOR DECEMBER 14, 2005

This is the Southeastern Turkey press summary for December 14, 2005. Please note that Turkish press reports often contain errors or exaggerations; AmConsulate Adana does not vouch for the accuracy of the reports summarized here.

POLITICAL, SECURITY, HUMAN RIGHTS

RADIKAL / SABAH/ ZAMAN: Harun Ayik, the prosecutor who initiated the investigation into the Semdinli case, reportedly conveyed important assessments regarding the case to Turkish Parliament's Human Rights Commission. According to the ballistics report, the two bombs used in the bookstore bombing were the same type of bombs found in the car of the officers held as defendants in the case, Ayik told the Commission members. Ayik also verified that sketches of the plans of the shopping center, where the bookstore was located, were also found in the officers' car along with an alleged 'death list.' According to Ayik, the bombing in the Semdinli bookstore could have links with outside forces. Ayik's assessments of the Semdinli Security Directorate claiming that there was no discipline at the directorate and that the directorate was insufficient in addressing judicial matters were also included in the report.

EKSPRES / BOLGE / SABAH (GUNEY) / RADIKAL / CUMHURIYET / ZAMAN / HURRIYET: Serdar Arslanoglu, an employee of the TRT (Turkish Radio and Television), who was chased by a man he allegedly quarreled with for an unspecified reason in the middle of the night, was beaten to death when he ran into the yard of a residential building in Adana, and residents mistook him for a burglar.

HURRIYET / ZAMAN / CUMHURIYET: During a press announcement, former Prime Minister Bulent Ecevit said that PKK terrorism was encouraged by the U.S. with great speed. Ecevit reportedly said, "The U.S. is apparently taking a serious stance against Turkey via encouraging the activities which have been detrimental to Turkey in northern Iraq." Ecevit further commented on the case of Van Centennial University Rector Yucel Askin, saying, "I did not observe any reactionary tendencies at the university during my visit (on an unspecified date) there; therefore I do not think he was arrested because of his fight against these tendencies."

ZAMAN: The daily pointed out that Isa Esme, YOK (Higher Education Board) Deputy Chairperson, after arriving in Van to attend the trial of Yucel Askin, went to the military officers' guesthouse for his lodging. Van Centennial University Vice Rector and the wife of Yucel Askin were among the people who welcomed Esme.

OZGUR GUNDEM: Sirnak's KESK (Confederation of Public Employees Union) launched a campaign to urge the government to build universities in the southeastern region. KESK sent a petition to the Turkish Parliament to include the southeastern provinces in the draft law which envisages building new universities in Turkey.

OZGUR GUNDEM: Members of the Hakkari Democracy Platform reacted to the recent arrest of Sebahattin Suvagci, the former DEHAP (Democratic People's Party) Hakkari Provincial Chairperson, for attending a program of pro-PKK ROJ TV and making statements to it. Human Rights Association National Chairperson Reyhan Yalcindag said that the arrest was unfair and against the law.

OZGUR GUNDEM: Van Bar Association organized a seminar called "Human Rights and Law." Fifty-seven attorneys working in Van, Mus and Hakkari provinces attended the seminar.

OZGUR GUNDEM: Hasim Celebi, a DEHAP member, has recently disappeared and nobody has seen him for one week. His family, fearing that Celebi's life might be at risk, applied to the Human Rights Association Chapter in Elazig.

EKSPRES / BOLGE / ZAMAN: Adana Chamber of Commerce announced a decision envisaging the foundation of a university in Adana.

RADIKAL: Deputy Governor of Eskisehir announced that all kinds of demonstrations, public events, press announcements and similar activities will be banned on December 19, the trial day of Ugur and Ahmet Kaymaz, to maintain a secure and peaceful environment during the trial.

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